TAKING THE MIDDLE GROUND IN INTERACTIONIST RELATIONSHIPS IN QUEENSLAND TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION (TAFE), AUSTRALIA

Jacqueline Caskey[i]
orcid.org/0000-0002-3487-7711
[1]Dr., School of Social Science,
Faculty of Arts, Business and Law,
University of the Sunshine Coast,
Australia

Abstract:
This study explores the support and services utilised by adult students with dyslexia in five Australian TAFE Colleges In this study, adult students with dyslexia were completing Certificate III and above programs in Technical and Further Education (TAFE) Colleges. In exploring the support provided in TAFE, Disability Officers were utilised in the provision of support and servicing adult students. As identified that Disability Officers, not only offered services to adult students with dyslexia, they became their critical friends and aided in social settings external to the TAFE Colleges. The methodology was an embedded case study, which used semi-structured interview questions, in 28 participants. The theories used were Lipsky's (1983, 2010) Street-Level Bureaucracy and Fine and Sirin's (2007) Hyphenated-Self. A foundational method as developed in this study, known as the Relational: Hyphenated-Self to explain the inclusion and exclusion perceived by adult students with dyslexia as they were progressing in TAFE.

Keywords: relational being; hyphenated-self; relationships; dyslexia; TAFE

1. Introduction

The central focus of this study was around adult students who have dyslexia and the support and services provided for them in Australian Technical and Further Education (TAFE). The voices of adult students were crucial in this study; they offered an ability to hear the difficulties that arose for adult students in educational, cultural and social contexts in Queensland. There were limited studies on dyslexia in Australia at the time of this research (Riddick, 2000; Tanner, 2010). Furthermore, in relating to the various

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[i] Correspondence: email jacquelinec01@outlook.com, jacque@dyslexicqld.com

definitions of dyslexia and spaces, such as gaps emerging in this study. This paper aims to review the theoretical aspects identified in this study, which supported and empowered adult learners with dyslexia in TAFE Institutes and Colleges. TAFE is a public Vocational Education and Training (VET) organisation in Australia and offers courses in every State and Territory.

The rationale for this study was to appropriately support people with dyslexia in the vocational context. Theoretically, it took several theories that captured relationships, open and not contrived, between the DOs, providing advocacy in their roles, becoming autonomous in that position. The social identity of adult students with dyslexia was constructed early in this study, from a previous dark past. The past experiences were halted in this context, through the practices of DOs in TAFE. Adult students with dyslexia were empowered to move forward in their social activities, as well as their educational performance.

A major starting point in considering our knowledge about dyslexia and those who experience it can be challenging for various parties. The nature of this research approach can take a dichotomous approach; it can take a quantitative approach or become a qualitative study. Both approaches involve different assumptions about the nature of knowledge and how researchers' approach or engage with individuals producing their outputs (Innes, 2019). In particular, qualitative research identifies a problem in the field, then explores and describes people and situations within that problem, which is under review (Merriam, 1998, 2009). These descriptive studies come up with findings that can be utilised later in a quantitative study. In the paragraphs below, firstly a quantitative study, followed by some qualitative studies are reviewed.

In comparison, one quantitative study in Finland of nurses with dyslexia was surveyed and it was identified that nurses with dyslexia, illustrated how dyslexia could affect learning in practical settings, as well as in classroom contexts (Grandell-Niemi, Hupli, Leino-Kilpi, & Puukka, 2005). That study focused on a quantitative approach, that nursing students with dyslexia had difficulty with the terminology of generic medications, which also posed a problem for mainstream students who found this terminology challenging (Grandell-Niemi et al., 2005).

Grandell-Niemi, Hupli et al., (2005) identified that percentages of nurses for Medication Calculations Skills Test (MCS):
- (50%) of nursing students scored 67% and 57%; and
- (79%) of registered nurses on the calculation skills test.

Despite the low scores, for both nurse participants, registered nurses performed better than nursing students on both tests. However, that study was essential for future insights into dyslexia in the field of nursing and their specific needs related to success in workplace learning contexts (Grandell-Niemi et al., 2005).

In comparison to that study is White's (2007) qualitative case-study, exploring nurses with dyslexia, in clinical practice. In that study, the researcher had to draw participants from another nursing school due to the lack of nurse participants in the first group. The reluctance of student nurses may result from public disclosure of their

disability. White (2007), used a longitudinal study of nurse practices' in various clinical settings. Furthermore, White (2007) used semi-structured interview questions. Students with dyslexia were having difficulties with strategies, in learning contexts. Both White (2007) and Caskey's (2017) studies noted that additional time was required for assessment, assignments, mathematical skills, and anxiety resulted when dispensing medication; or taking exams, with practical applications in TAFE respectively.

2. Definitions of Dyslexia and Learning Disabilities

In research, many quantitative studies were undertaken to define dyslexia and disability (Aboud, Barquero, & Cutting, 2018; Bennett, Romano, Howard, & Howard, 2008; Hall, 2008), using the medical model of disability. In quantitative research, well-known neurologists have developed a definition for dyslexia (Lyon, Shaywitz, & Shaywitz, 2003). A learning disability is identified in recent research (Zang & Dymke, 2017) as defined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, IDEA, American legislative guidelines. IDEA identifies a learning disability as a specific learning disability, noted below:

> "According to IDEA, SLD is "a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which disorder may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations. Such term includes such conditions as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. Such term does not include a learning problem that is primarily the result of the visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, of mental retardation*, of emotional disturbance, or environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage." (20 U.S.C. § 1401 (30))* Known as an Intellectual Disability (cited by Cortiella & Horowitz, 2014).

This definition delivers medical notations and terms primarily used in supporting people with SLD/dyslexia using a quantitative ideal. In alignment with Lyon, Shaywitz and Shaywitz, (2003), a medicalisation of that definition of dyslexia. As identified, the neurological and medical research of the time was implemented in that definition. Lyon et al., (2003) outcomes have causes typical of the pattern-focused quantitative approaches for explaining dyslexia, such as the causes of phonological impairment, a deficit, and reading disability.

In contrast to such medical, quantitively-focused definitions of dyslexia, Reid (2009, 2016) and others, identified dyslexia as a disability, where participants perceived they had difficulties, (e.g., reading, writing and spelling) in learning and social contexts (Burns & Bell, 2010; Cotton, 2010; White, 2007). Despite the many definitions of dyslexia by researchers, such as Lyon, Shaywitz and Shaywitz (2003); Tumner and Greaney (2010); and Reid (2009, 2016). This paper will utilise Reid's (2009) definition for dyslexia, providing a reflective and operational position of dyslexia.

"Dyslexia is a difficulty [challenge for students with difficulties in literacy] *where students have processing difference, often characterised by difficulties in literacy acquisition affecting reading, writing, and spelling. It can also have an impact on cognitive processes such as memory, the speed of processing, time management, coordination, and automaticity. There may be visual and phonological difficulties, and there are usually some discrepancies in educational performances. There will be individual differences and individual variation."* (Reid, 2009a, p. 4).

In this study, there were many students presenting with various learning difficulties, which had been diagnosed as a specific/learning disability (SLD, LD), visual stress syndrome (e.g. Meares-Irlen Syndrome) (MIS) or dyslexia. In Australia, throughout this study, dyslexia was not diagnosed, and some government departments were using the term learning difficulties (ADCET, 2018a; Australian Disability Clearinghouse for Education and Training, 2009). Learning difficulties do not attract funding, so students with this diagnosis have to be reviewed again by medical or psychological specialists (ADCET, 2018b).

2.1 Incidence of Dyslexia
In Australia, there was little data on specific learning disabilities/dyslexia, until recently (ADCET, 2018b). However, developmental dyslexia is a disability noted in national statistics. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) reviews *Disabilities and Aging* as one of the headings that captures the data relating to developmental disabilities. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (2016) identified, disabilities were categorised as follows: a) physical condition (78.5%); b) intellectual and developmental disorders are second-most commonly reported at (6.3%); and c) depression and mood affective disorders (4.2%) (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016). Bond et al., (2010) noted that 5-10% of adults and children suffered from various forms of dyslexia that affected their everyday functioning. These are similar data aligned to that of the latest ABS data (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016). There are challenges for people with dyslexia, as identified by the medicalisation of a disability (Mason & Reiser, 2014).

2.2 Social Justice in Research
Mason and Reiser, (2014) acknowledge that a lack of understanding that aligns to people with disabilities, illustrating a highly medicalised inference. Concurrence to this stance, is the socialisation of individuals in both social and cultural contexts, such as the relationships between individuals, within TAFE. Esteemed social justice combatants, Richard Reiser and Michelene Mason, took this stance (Mason & Reiser, 2014; Reiser, 2009). Mason and Reiser (2014) identified the social movement of disability, as opposed to the medical model. The medical model focuses on the inabilities, labelling, negative attitudes and the need for a professional to cure or treat the impairment (Reiser, 2014).

In this study, Disability Service Officers (DSOs/Disability Officers (DOs) became social justice advocates for adult students with dyslexia, known as Street-Level

Advocates. Disability Officers were known to have a communicative relationship with adult students, making their previous educational experiences a thing of the past. Adult students with dyslexia now had a positive view of themselves and they became successful through DO advocacy. Mature students were confident and able to present in public, with student peers. Emerging from the presenting gaps in support, were the relationships, which were timely and essential for adult students with dyslexia who were becoming 'normalised' within TAFE.

Normalisation is a term utilised with regards to students who have disabilities, whereby they are often treated as 'different' in educational contexts, as critiqued in the literature (Carson, 1992; Mason & Reiser, 2014; Riddick, 2000). Furthermore, there were other implications for this research, in that people with dyslexia have been poorly treated by individuals and organisations, mainly, by those in workplaces. Despite this interaction occurring between the DOs and adult students with dyslexia, it was a different relationship in the TAFE learning context; one of respect, caring and supportive contexts (Murphy, 2013; Sanford, 2000).

Despite the differences between theoretical positions, participants and contexts there are commonalities, still not resolved in educational sectors (e.g., the fact that students who often need support do not get it, because they refuse to disclose a disability formally). Formal disclosure meant that all students have to present a medical certificate from an educational psychologist or an RMO before they can access funding for the disability (Caskey, 2017). In addition, some educators do not understand the extent of the challenges that people with developmental dyslexia experience in learning; particularly when inappropriate support was delivered in classrooms (Smith, 2005).

TAFE Queensland has a procedural documents to assist teachers with 'reasonable adjustments' (Queensland VET Development Center, 2010). Reasonable Adjustments are accommodations for the disability (e.g., people who have reading difficulties could use Dragon Naturally Speaking©, a speech to text, with a reader to speak back written text). Many teachers do not know of the existence of such technology or that document and refer their concerns back to the DSOs in TAFE. In this study, many issues require exploration, due to the lack of appropriate support to fit all outcomes, such as advocacy, the self, inclusion-exclusion, relationships and bureaucratic policies/procedures and guidelines. Therefore, there were several options for this research, from exclusion, social justice challenges, support challenges or the Street-Level Advocacy of DOs. However, this study has focused on many of the challenges faced by adult students with dyslexia. In developing two new foundational theories as opposed to utilising existing theories, this study has given older methods a new focus, for adult students with dyslexia and DOs in a micro-social context of TAFE; and the macro-social implications of legislation and policy existing within TAFE Colleges. This study focuses on qualitative research design, to discuss these new foundational theories from the emerging data in this study.

3. Research Design

This study uses a qualitative paradigm (Corbin & Strauss, 2014; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011), meaning the framework surrounding this study is purely qualitative (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Ontology and epistemology used is Social Constructionism (Gergen, 2005, 2009) and Relational Being (Gergen, 2010). In other research, as suggested the 'relational being' was an ontological perspective (Slife, 2004, 2010). This study remained an interactional and relational (Gergen, 2010) study throughout the methodological and analysis processes. The ontology is about the way of thinking of the world in which one lives (Crotty, 1998; Slife, 2004) (see Research Design Below).

Table 1: Research Design

Epistemology	Social Constructionism	Gergen (2005, 2009)
	Relational Being	Gergen (2010)
Methodology	Case Study	Yin (2004, 2009)
Theory	Hyphenated-Self	Fine and Sirin (2007)
	Social Constructionist Theory	Gergen (1985, 2005)
Methods	Semi-Structured Interviews	Oppenheim (2003)

The case study methodology uses embedded cases, DSOs and adult students, within five TAFE Institutes. The cases were analysed one case at a time, firstly, the individual student, followed by the individual DO, and each TAFE, unpacking each of the five TAFE cases (Yin, 2009). All data were compared and contrasted using the following: a) Constant Comparative Method (Boeije, 2002);b) manually, axial and selective coding (Saldana, 2013; Yin, 2003, 2009) and c) triangulation/converged (Angermüller, 2005), providing final results (Bryman, 2012; Charmaz, 2011; Cohen & Manion, 1989; Reismann, 2008; Sanotos, 2004). This study illustrated the challenges that were faced in this research.

3.1 Current Research
Caskey (2017) explored the challenges of dyslexia through a qualitative lens, enabling the voice of adult students with dyslexia to be heard. TAFE institutes were set in three regional and two metropolitan areas of Queensland, Australia. A two-stage research project ensued. Stage 1, semi-structured interviews explored the problems experienced by adult students with dyslexia in five TAFE Colleges. Stage 2 interviews reviewed the perceptions of DOs who supported students. People with dyslexia have difficulties in educational, workplace and family contexts, with social issues that affect students with dyslexia (Caskey, 2017; Caskey, Innes, & Lovell, 2018; Kirk & Reid, 1999; Reid, 2010a, 2010b, 2016). In this study, adult students would prefer individual interactions in practice and need individually tailored support for their educational needs in classrooms.

3.2 Adult Student Participants

Participants are mature students with dyslexia studying Certificate III through to Diploma courses within one of five TAFE contexts. There were 22 participants in total, seven males and 15 females, aged between 18 and >55 years of age. Adult students were interviewed individually, within each TAFE college. Students were completing courses, and many had finalised their enrolment, with results. A previous study on nursing and a mid-range form of advocacy were utilised to support the theoretical underpinning and aided with the implications of this study (Xiaoyan & Jezewski, 2007).

Xiaoyan and Jezewski's (2007) study used a structure for researchers, to expand on in their research; they utilised a mid-range implication of advocacy within the nursing profession. That study identified six core concepts of a Mid-Range of advocacy, which were adapted for this study. The advocacy concepts of Xiaoyan and Jezewski (2007) were: a) safeguarding clients' autonomy; b) acting on behalf of clients; c) championing social justice in the provision of disability support and servicing; d) antecedents of client advocacy; e) consequences of client advocacy; and f) empirical referents to advocacy (adapted from Xiaoyan & Jezewski, 2007; p. 101). In comparison to Xiaoyan and Jezewski (2007), there were also footprints of DOs that led a pathway in developing an emerging mid-range theory. This qualitative research also used Xiaoyan and Jezewski's (2007) theoretical outline to structure the case-study, on the emergence of DO respondents' findings were of a theory of advocacy within TAFE. This research utilised this framework, to avoid any ethical and theoretical gaps in developing an emerging framework.

This study identified that a trail was emerging, which provided the understanding and gave meaning to the theoretical notions of good-will, utilising a mid-range theory. Merton's middle range processes of organisations enabled this research to construct, from the categories, sub-categories and themes, a conduit for DOs 'new' advocacy, which was emerging from their good deeds, caring and social justice principles. To further develop and utilise an emergent theory for DOs, a framework must be useful to both respondents (e.g., adult students diagnosed with dyslexia and DOs). In addition to the structure, there was a relationship between both respondents in TAFE. This relationship was supportive, with DOs being a critical friend, utilising practices at the frontline of service for the adult students. Lipsky's (1983, 2010) Street-Level Bureaucrats, became Street-Level Advocates in the TAFE DOs. In addition to the emergence of social justice, which is identified in the Relational Being of the relationships occurring within TAFE.

3.3 Gergen's 'Relational Being' as Aligned with this Study

In this study, there was an allegiance to the philosophy of Kenneth Gergen (2010). In alliance with Gergen (2010), who suggested that in the relationship is a *bounded being*, which is the self, a human being, evident in social interactions and cultural contexts. This study illustrated social interactions which could be challenging for adult students with dyslexia, due to the uncertainty of 'self'. As demonstrated by adult students on

enrolment, many had low self-esteem and perceived they were excluded in this educational context; like so many environments before this enrolment. Adult students became a more confident self in the bounded being, and the 'being' was becoming transformed into a more confident 'self', the 'relational being' (Gergen, 2010).

The self could now be evident in the culture of the *bounded being*, and on the cusp of the *transforming tradition,* a more social-self with others (Caskey, 2017; Gergen, 2010). On this initial phase to becoming the relational being (Gergen, 2010); adult students with dyslexia were now beginning to have meaningful relationships with DOs in TAFE Institutes. This meaningfulness is described by Wittgenstein (1953) as cited by Gergen (2018), that words have meaning when communicated in social situations, as a relationship was occurring between the individuals (Gergen, 2018). These meanings of words are created from the relationship, which occurred in context-bound, cultural context (e.g., TAFE) through interactions.

As discerned in Gergen's relationships, the initial stages were *co-action and creation of the interactions* (Gergen, 2010). As the relationships grow and develop over time, there can be failures and successes, which diminish and flourish in terms of that relationship, which occurs in the relational flow or interactions between individuals over time (Gergen, 2010). Furthermore, this study identified that people with dyslexia could develop self-esteem, confidence, and self-worth, through harmonious relationships. The relationship of giving, which occurs from both parties in TAFE — often resulting, in that interactional relationship between individuals, such as DOs and the adult students, in this educational context.

Gergen (2010) argued that *education is relational,* and it is identified in this research. If there is a strong relationship occurring in the educational context between individuals, there is social acceptance, equality in context and reverence within and between the group/individual interactions. This study is a relational study that goes beyond the initial stages of Gergen's (2010) relational being, it touches on the basics of marginalised human beings, enabling them to take small steps of success through the relationships occurring between individuals (e.g., DOs and adult students with dyslexia) within the cultural contexts of TAFE.

Underpinning these relationships was the inclusion and exclusion of adult students with dyslexia in this tertiary context. Many hidden variables affected students' learning in TAFE, as is in every educational context (Ballard, 1999; Duran, Zhou, Frew, Kwok, & Benz, 2013; Graham & Sweller, 2011; Kane, 2005; Slee & Allan, 2005). It was noted by Fine and Sirin (2007) that there became a Hyphenated-Self with people who were Muslim immigrants to America. Although, many of the migrants were American-Muslim youth, they became excluded after the 9/11 bombings in New York City, solely because they were Muslim and Americans perceived the atrocities of 9/11, were in their neighbourhoods (Fine & Sirin, 2007).

Furthermore, Fine and Sirin's (2007) research illustrated that American-Muslims were both included and excluded in communities, because of perceived cultural characteristics. Many of their American-non-Muslim friends, were now marginalising

and eliminating (exclusion) them because of these atrocities and their ethnicity (Fine & Sirin, 2007). There was a case of the Hyphenated-Self, the American and the Muslim were now hyphenated, and also, they were either included and excluded accordingly in that study (Fine & Sirin, 2007). However, both the Relational Being of Gergen (2010) and the Hyphenated-Self of Fine and Sirin (2007), had to be co-contributing to outcomes of this study.

Fine and Sirin (2007) developed eight concepts that they identified in that study of Muslim-American youth, which would illustrate how these youths were excluded from their group of perceived American friends. Concepts utilised by Fine and Sirin (2007) were:

a) vulnerability;
b) political dimensions;
c) religious;
d) cultural factors (ethnicity);
e) racial (ignored/excluded);
f) a continuum of being accepted/included or not being accepted;
g) discrimination; and
h) on the hyphen, with nowhere to move (e.g., with previous friends and in their neighbourhoods), as extrapolated from Fine and Sirin, (2007 pp. 16-38).

In this research, the Relational: Hyphenated-Self was the foundational theory that occurred through the interacting, constructing relationships that has been occurring in TAFE. In co-joining the theories/ontological tenets together, criteria are listed below:

1) Both the *Vulnerable* (Fine & Sirin, 2007) and *Marginalised* (Gergen & Gergen, 2014) are addressed, in adult students who have dyslexia and both researchers' utilise these terms;
2) Political (Fine and Sirin, 2007) and Global (Gergen 2010) are discussed in legislation and policies for adult students with dyslexia;
3) *Co-action and creation of the interactions* (Gergen, 2010) and for Fine and Sirin (2007) is the *interactions* from American non-Muslim students;
4) *Bounded Being* (e.g., interaction the bounded human unit) or the 'Self' (e.g., tomb, machine, body or the self as Synott, 1992 described the social construction of the body (Synott (1992) as cited byGergen, 2010, p. 97); as termed by both authors (Fine & Sirin, 2007; Gergen, 2010);
5) *Cultural factors* in Gergen (2010) are the organisations or contexts, as well as one's culture in which one is entrenched; Fine and Sirin (2007) uses the term *Ethnicity* in that study;
6) *Racism* for Fine and Sirin (2007) is inclusion and exclusion in an educational context or community context; while racism for Gergen (2010) is not always utilised; despite Gergen (1999) argues that *Vulnerability* of individuals is evident in all research (Gergen, 1999) (e.g., could elude to race, ethnicity, gender, or disability);

7) *Continuum* of being accepted or not (Fine & Sirin, 2007); In Narrative mediation, Gergen (2010 p. 195) elicits that *Negotiation* is a mediating construct, where people can go from not being accepted, through mediation and there can be acceptance (Gergen, 2010). As illustrated in this study, where the student crosses the *hyphen*, along the *continuum* into the inclusion zone, transitioning from the exclusion zone in TAFE, emerging from the DOs support and advocacy;

8) *Discrimination* is not uncommon in studies of *disability* or those who are *marginalised*; both researchers noted one or another form of discrimination (Fine & Sirin, 2007; Gergen & Gergen, 2008);

9) The way in which Fine and Sirin (2007) have not notified the concepts in a way to review the *Inclusion* and *Exclusion* in societal areas, nor a diagrammatic view of this division of the hyphenated-self; Caskey's research reviews a Figure illustrating the Hyphenated-Self, where students transition across the hyphen from exclusion to inclusion (Caskey, 2017, p. 202). All Muslims did not always utilise the continuum; not unlike the adult students with dyslexia, who have progressed in TAFE. Twenty of the 22 participants transitioned into the inclusion zone.

It became evident that without relationships occurring in TAFE, there would be no Hyphenated-Self, because students would not be transitioning from the exclusion zone, through to the inclusion zone, crossing the hyphen.

Two students in this study did not cross the hyphen, they remained on the hyphen, as they did not have the confidence, or the feeling of self-worth to make that shift from the exclusion into the inclusion zone. The two students who had not progressed past the hyphen due to the damaged self, in social contexts through past educational experiences, as one participant reviewed:

"Probably at TAFE because I didn't go to school, I hated school so, I didn't learn anything at school. I've had no problems with any of them [staff and teachers] *in this TAFE. Even the library ladies behind the desk, they're so helpful too."* (Nicola, aged 45–54).

The emotional and social damage can trigger perceived feelings of inability and failure (Bartlett, 2010; Long, MacBlain, & MacBlain, 2007; Skaalvik, 2004). For that student, it had been the first time they had the confidence to undertake a vocational course and it had not been easy. The aim of developing this foundational theory, was for adult students to become independent and confident learners; which was attained by most respondents in TAFE. The Relational: Hyphenated-Self could only occur if and when the students progressed through the learning modules, having relationships with teachers, DOs and peers, throughout their studies, moving along the continuum until they reached the inclusion zone.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

Adult participants as children were supposedly supported in schools and were reported as having an LDs or SLDs (Australian Disability Clearinghouse for Education and Training, 2012), as dyslexia, in Australia, was not a recognised disability until 2013 (American Psychology Association, 2013). Adult students with dyslexia, faced challenges throughout their lives, in workplaces and community contexts. Dyslexia was later recognised by ADCET (2012) the year before to the *Diagnostic Statistical Manual of Mental Illness (V) (2013)* had implemented dyslexia in the manual (American Psychiatric Association, 2013, p. 67). Many children were diagnosed as having an LD, yet, also had dyslexia. There was little mention of dyslexia; it remained under 'SLD'. Recently, psychologists are utilising the term for people who have dyslexia, reluctantly, because it is such a broad symptomatic disorder, more of a syndrome (Reid, 2016).

Despite the numerous symptoms of dyslexia, all people with dyslexia have difficulties with reading, writing, spelling and textual comprehension, including an array of other challenges (Reid, 2016). Moreover, this research has identified the many facets of the self in participants (Gergen, 2011), where adult students with dyslexia came to TAFE with limited confidence and have achieved success and confidence in their abilities through the support and advocacy of DOs in TAFE, with them crossing the hyphen into inclusion.

Gergen (2010) argued that in an educational context, *relational* behaviours occur, which in this research became evident in the relationship between DOs and adult students in TAFE crossing the hyphen. Of the 22 students who enrolled, 20 participants crossed the hyphen, to become independent learners in the inclusion zone, through relationships with DOs, peers, and teachers. If there is a strong relationship occurring in the educational context between individuals, there is social acceptance and equality in the context, culture and reverence within and between group interactions. Furthermore, this study illustrated that damaged souls could gain recognition in their courses, which align within such cases, the individuals were utilising open communications, which aligned to a grounded practice of constructing a theory.

Firstly, practices were structured, despite the methods being perspectives of participants; and this enabled the researcher to analyse the data, emerging from each case. Secondly, interactional processes occurred between the adult students, DOs, teacher's and their peers in TAFE. This study used one-on-one interactions, in a cultural context, to form the foundational theory of the Relational: Hyphenated-Self. Gergen (2010) suggested that using open communication between two individuals, provides original meaning. It was evident with adult students with dyslexia perceived that an excellent connection (relationship) with DOs, peers without dyslexia and teachers, enabled them to succeed in their studies. Adult students with dyslexia became more accepting of the standards required in courses they were undertaking and perceived being accepted as classmates; they did not remain on the margins in TAFE. Adult

students with dyslexia were progressing with peers and transitioning into workplaces, crossing the hyphen from exclusion through to inclusion.

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